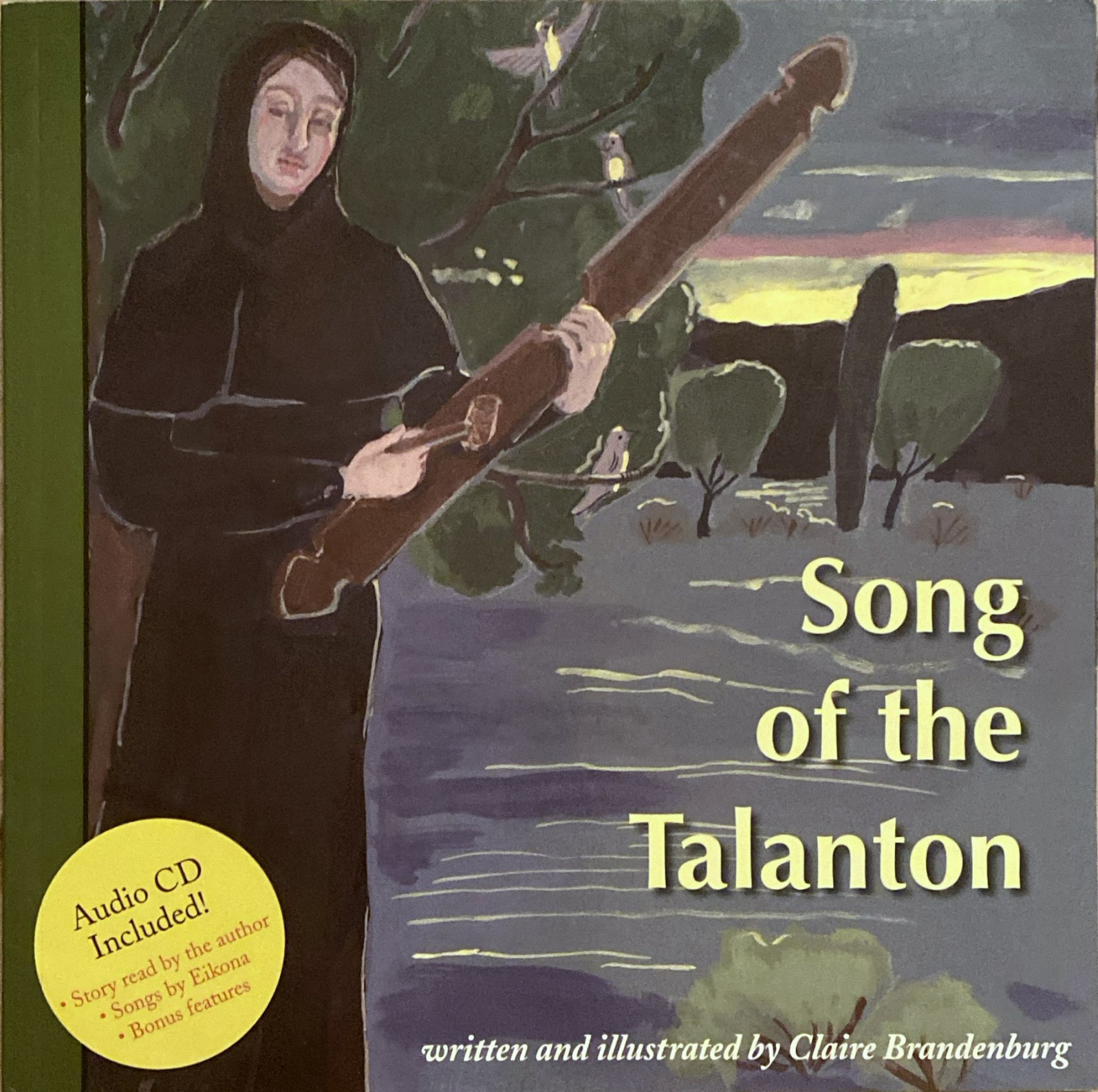
Song of the Talanton
Audio CD Included!
• Story read by the author
• Songs by Eikona
• Bonus features
written and illustrated by Claire Brandenburg

# Song of the Talanton

*written and illustrated by Claire Brandenburg*

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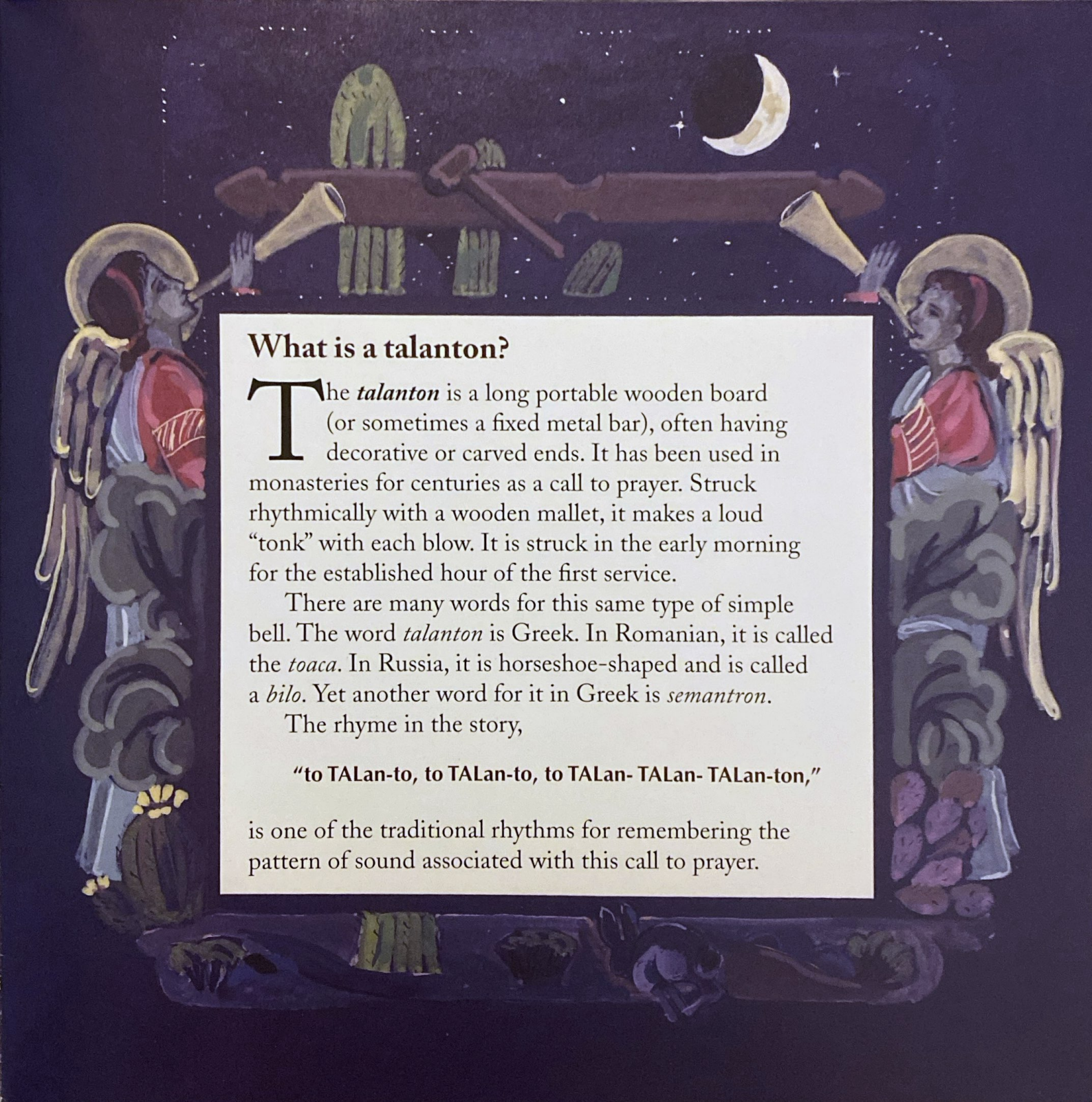
Published by Conciliar Press Ministries, Inc.
P.O. Box 76
Ben Lomond, California 95005

Printed in China

ISBN 10: 1-888212-90-X

ISBN 13: 978-1-888212-90-7



## What is a talanton?

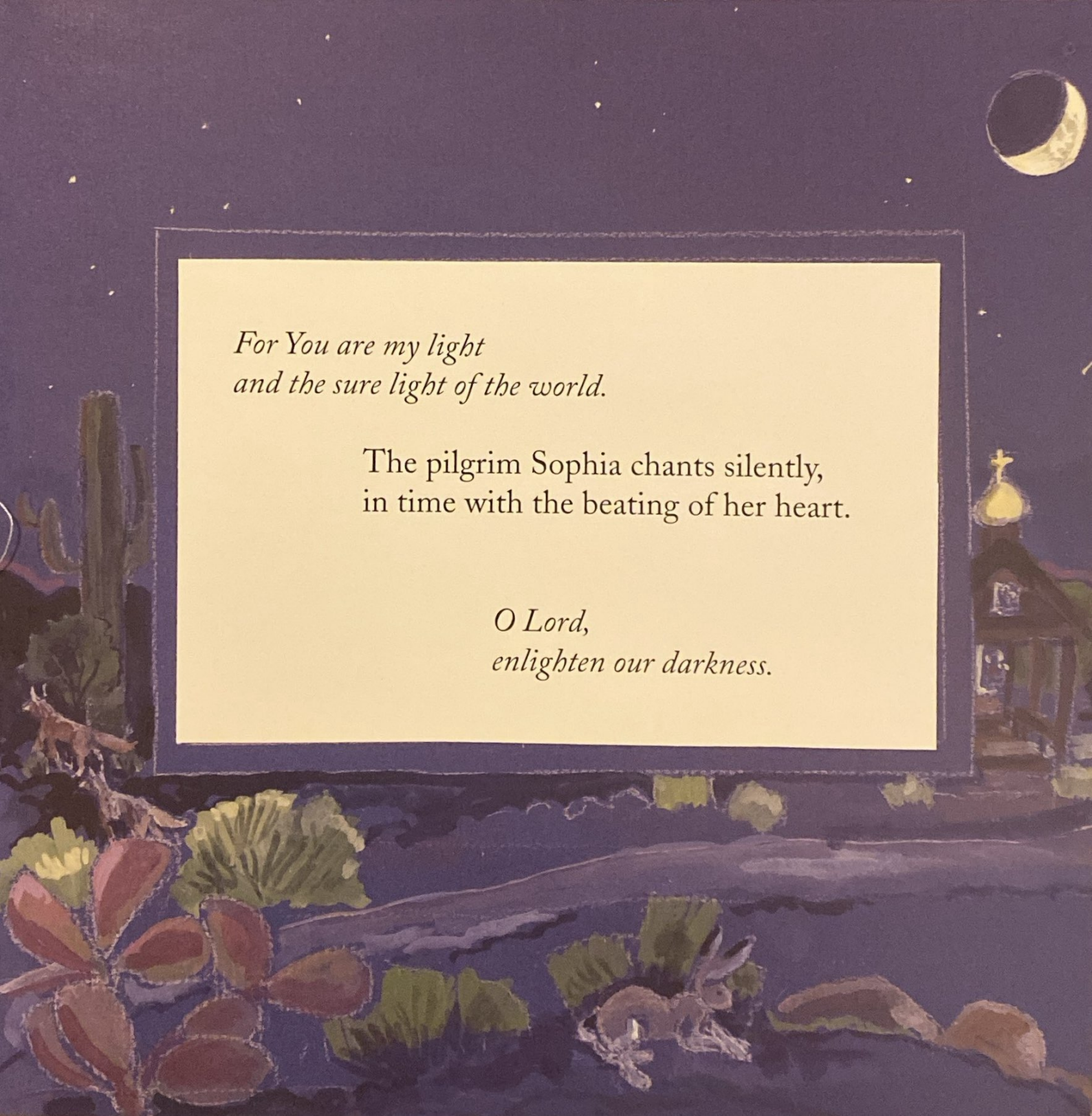
The ***talanton*** is a long portable wooden board (or sometimes a fixed metal bar), often having decorative or carved ends. It has been used in monasteries for centuries as a call to prayer. Struck rhythmically with a wooden mallet, it makes a loud "tonk" with each blow. It is struck in the early morning for the established hour of the first service.

There are many words for this same type of simple bell. The word *talanton* is Greek. In Romanian, it is called the *toaca*. In Russia, it is horseshoe-shaped and is called a *bilo*. Yet another word for it in Greek is *semantron*.

The rhyme in the story,

**"to TALan-to, to TALan-to, to TALan- TALan- TALan-ton,"**

is one of the traditional rhythms for remembering the pattern of sound associated with this call to prayer.



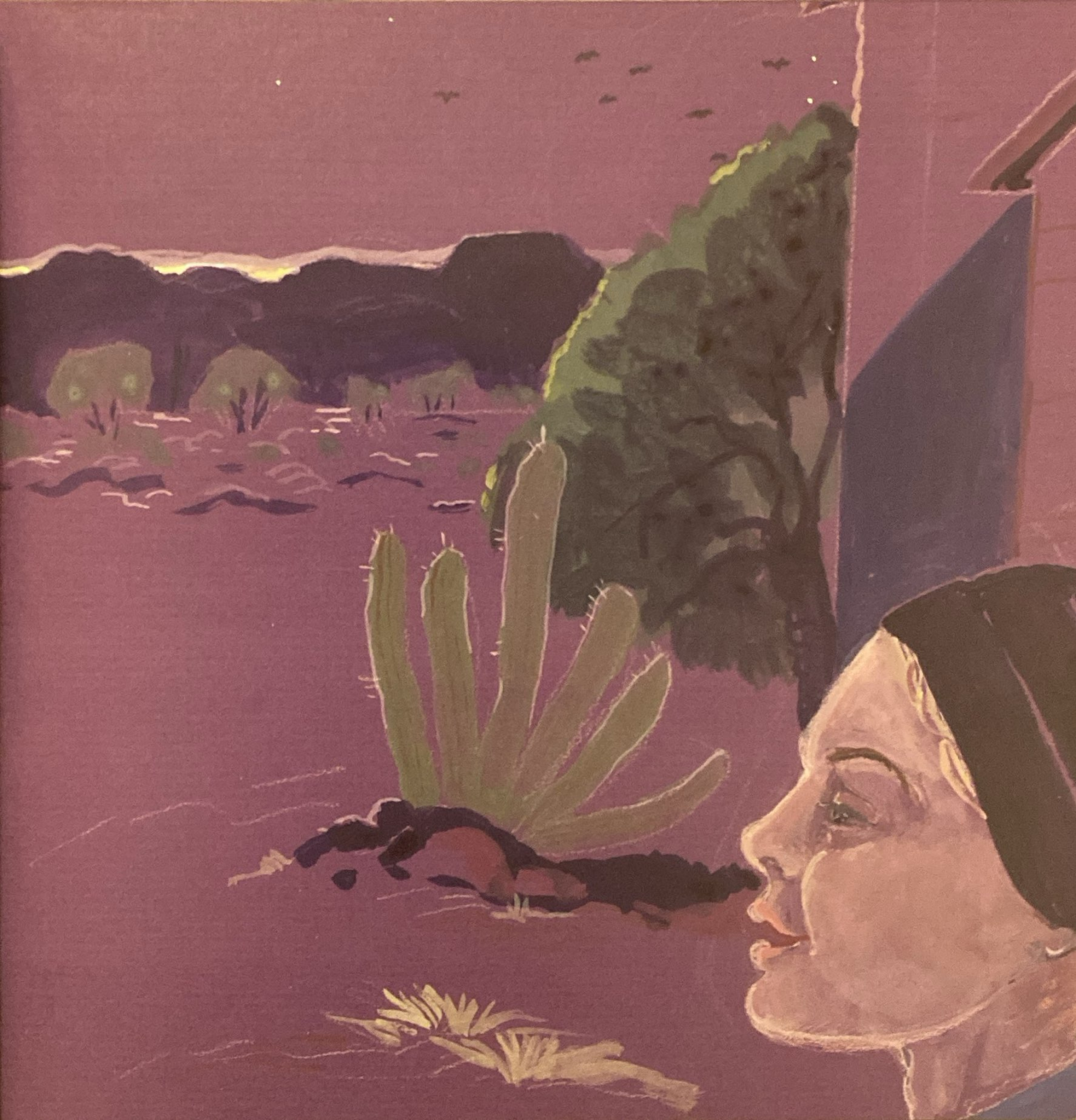
*For You are my light*
*and the sure light of the world.*

The pilgrim Sophia chants silently,
in time with the beating of her heart.

*O Lord,*
*enlighten our darkness.*

Hearing a knocking, Sophia turns toward the sound.
Standing on the desert road near the church in the pale dawn
is a nun, striking a long wooden *talanton* with a mallet.

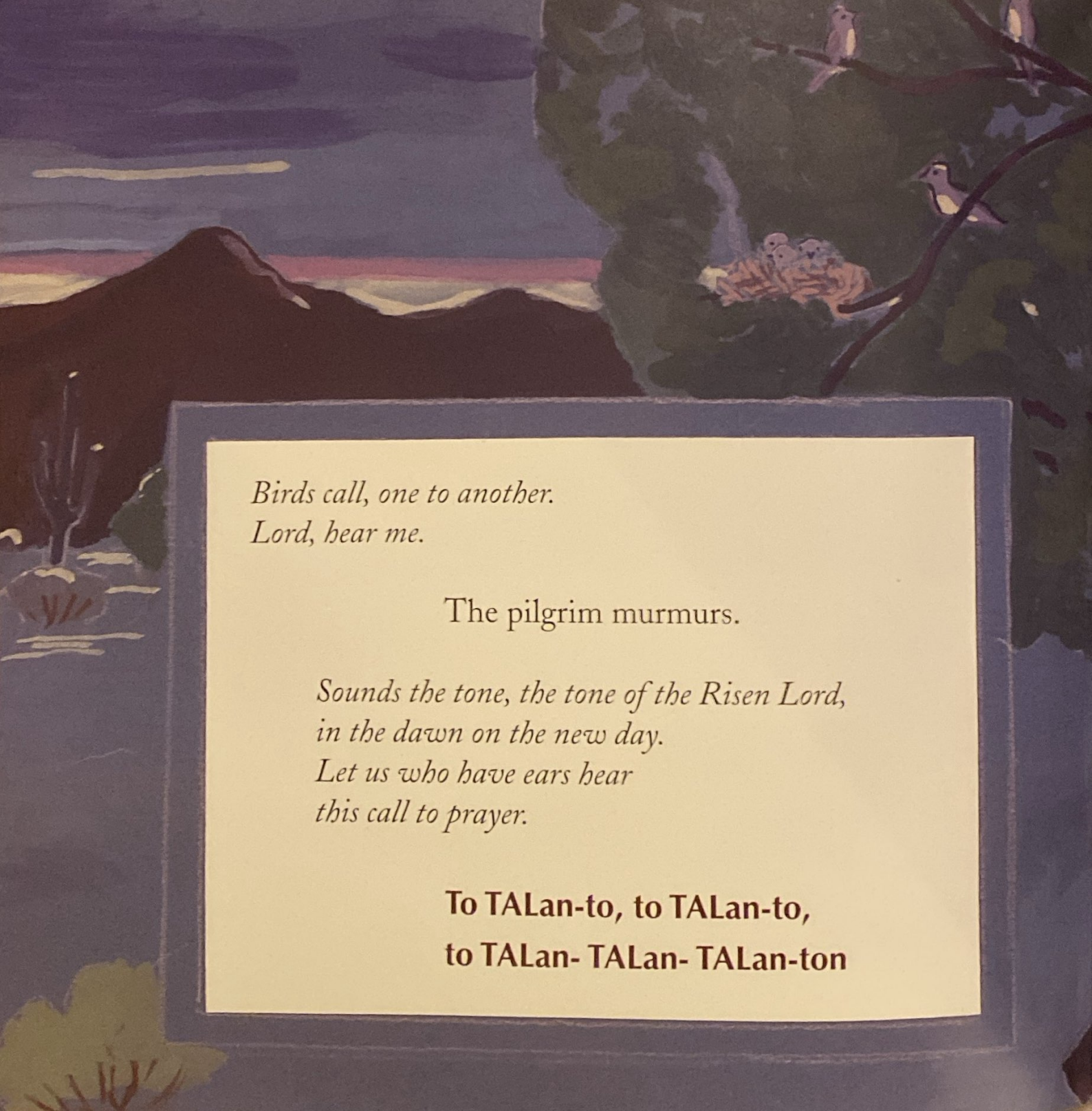
*You call us first from a distance.*
*Through Your servants we hear*
*in the heart, as a mystery,*
*the tonk, tonk, tonk, of mallet on wood.*



*From the beginning, God separated light from the darkness.*
*He turns the night into day.*
*O Lord, we welcome Your light.*
*With the coming day, hear our prayer.*

Sophia calls in the heavenly silence of her heart.

**Tonk, tonk, talan-ton,** sounds the talanton.

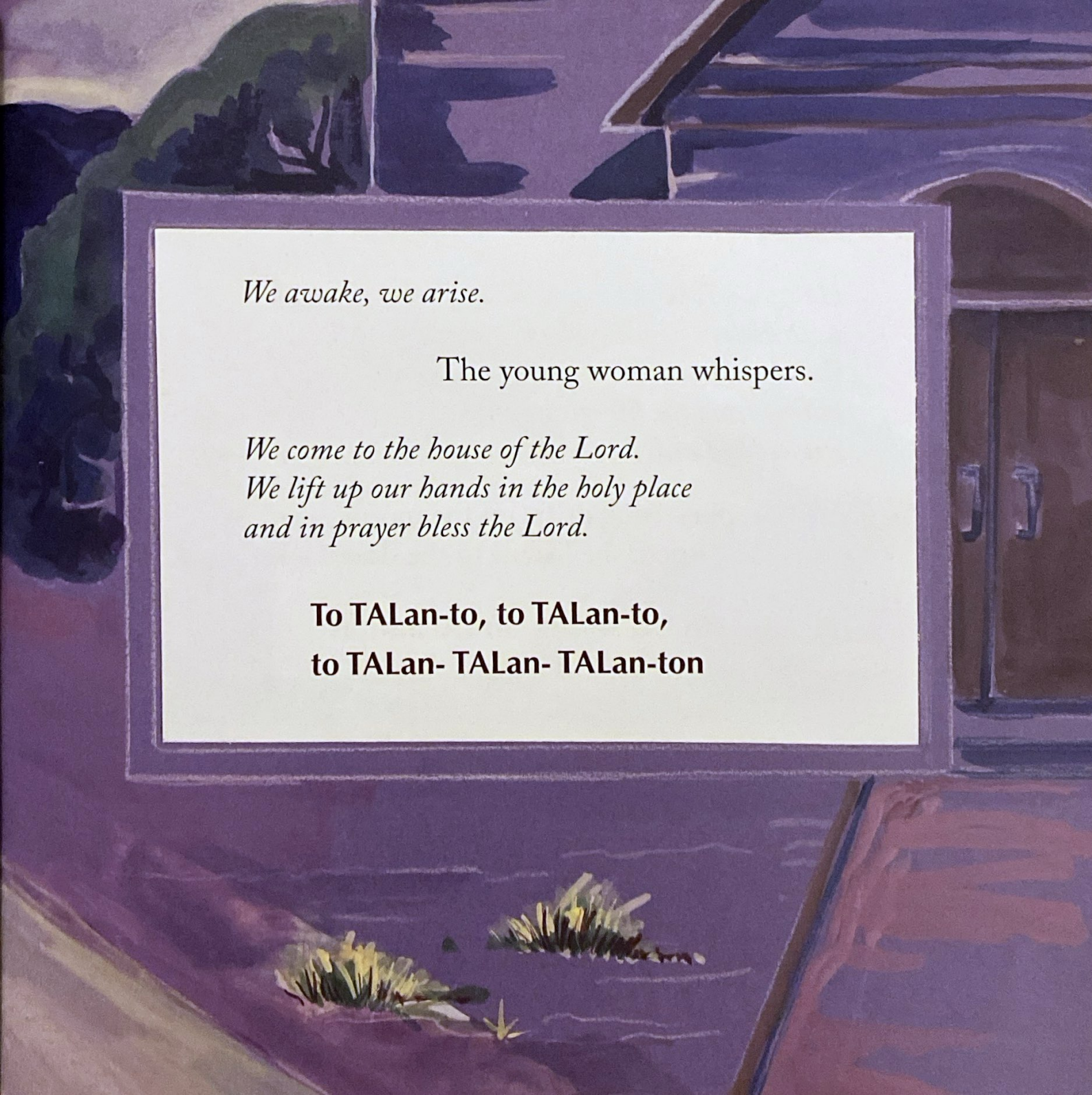


*Birds call, one to another.*
*Lord, hear me.*

The pilgrim murmurs.

*Sounds the tone, the tone of the Risen Lord,*
*in the dawn on the new day.*
*Let us who have ears hear*
*this call to prayer.*

**To TALan-to, to TALan-to,**
**to TALan- TALan- TALan-ton**



*We awake, we arise.*

The young woman whispers.

*We come to the house of the Lord.*
*We lift up our hands in the holy place*
*and in prayer bless the Lord.*

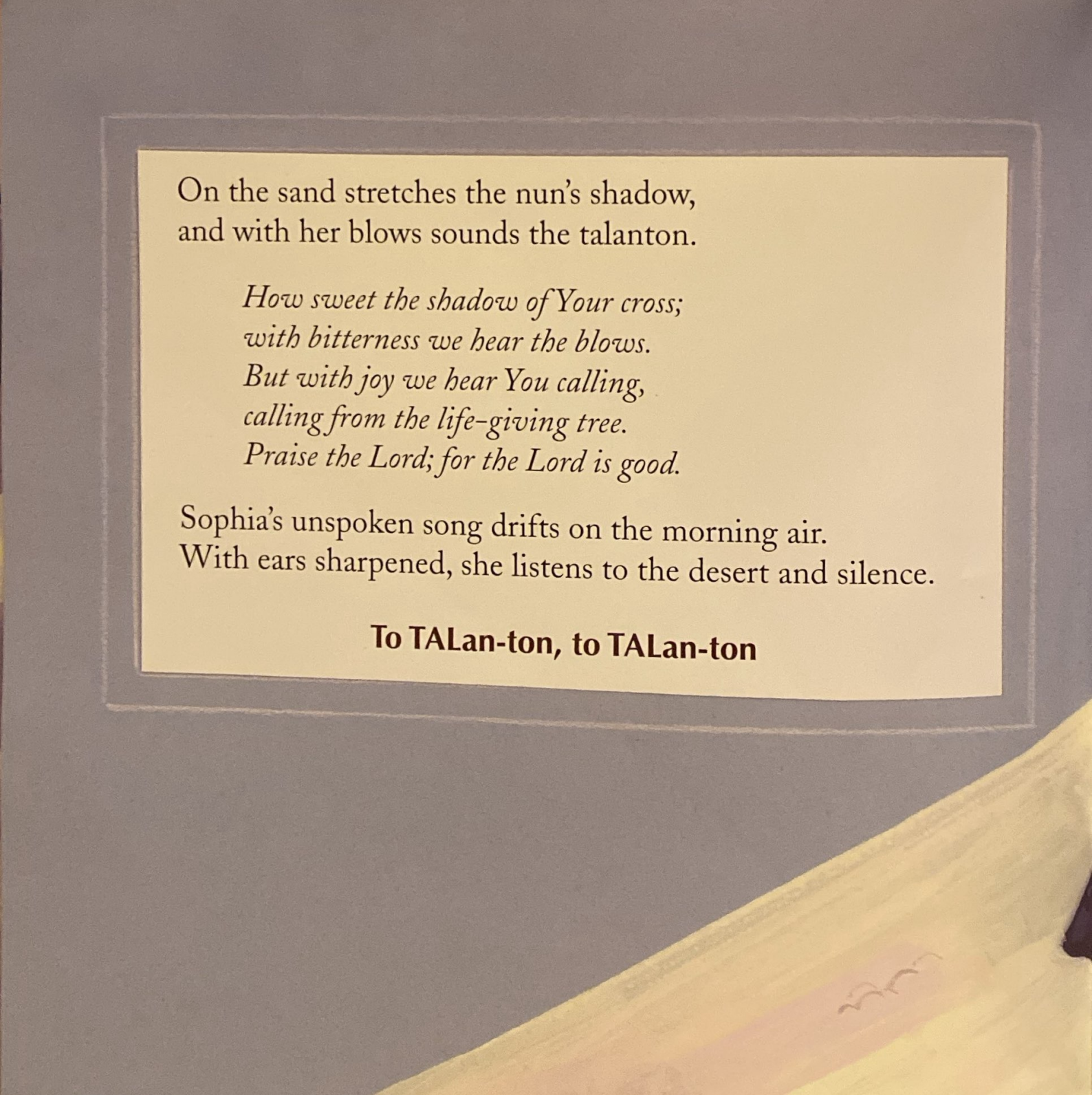
**To TALan-to, to TALan-to,**
**to TALan- TALan- TALan-ton**

On the sand stretches the nun's shadow,
and with her blows sounds the talanton.

*How sweet the shadow of Your cross;*
*with bitterness we hear the blows.*
*But with joy we hear You calling,*
*calling from the life-giving tree.*
*Praise the Lord; for the Lord is good.*

Sophia's unspoken song drifts on the morning air.
With ears sharpened, she listens to the desert and silence.

**To TALan-ton, to TALan-ton**



To TALan-to, to TALan-to,
to TALan- TALan- TALan-ton.

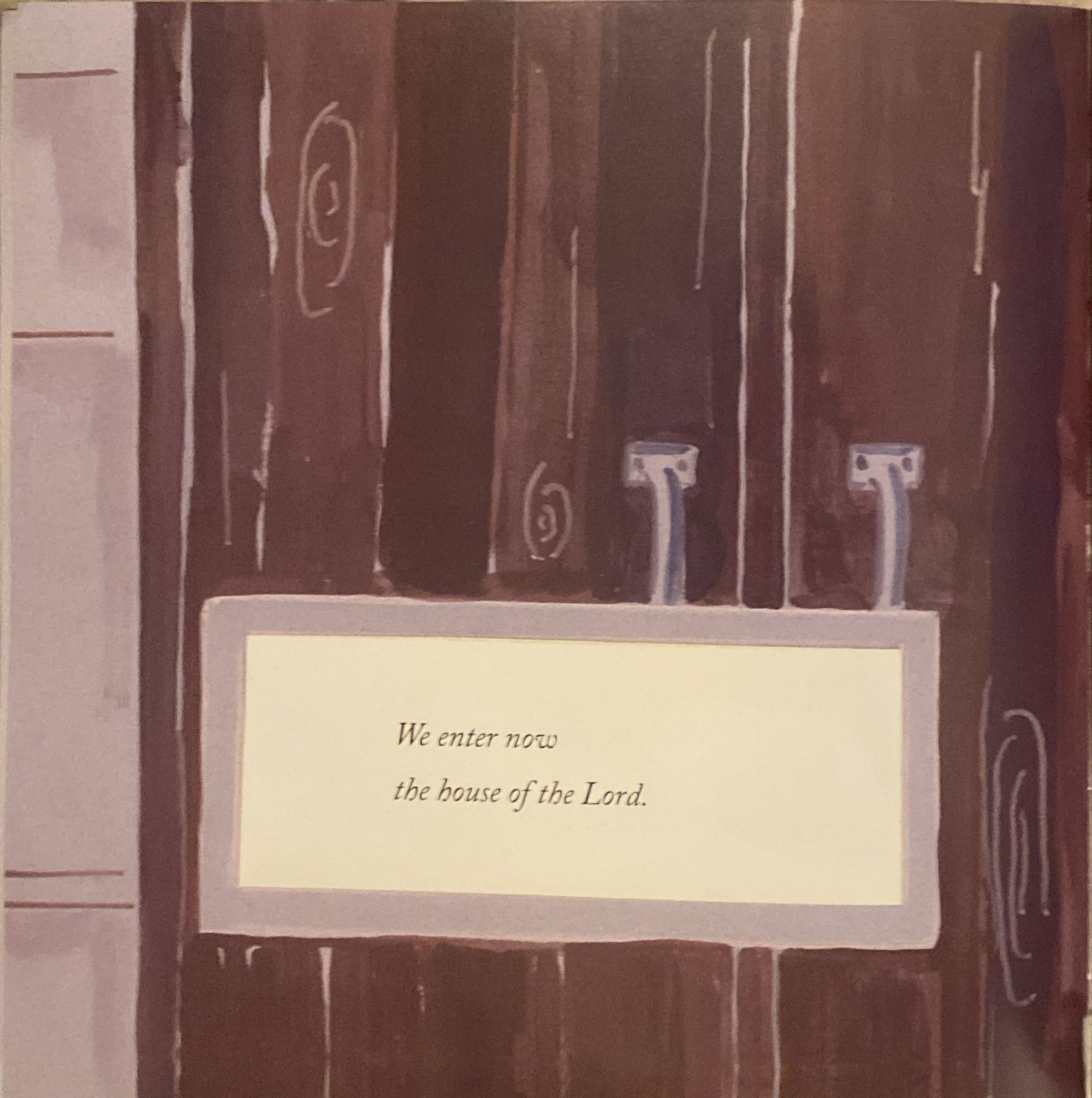
To TALan-to, to TALan-to,
to TALan- TALan- TALan-ton.

To TALan-to, to TALan-to,
to TALan- TALan- TALan-ton.

To TALan-to, to TALan-to,
to TALan- TALan- TALan-ton.

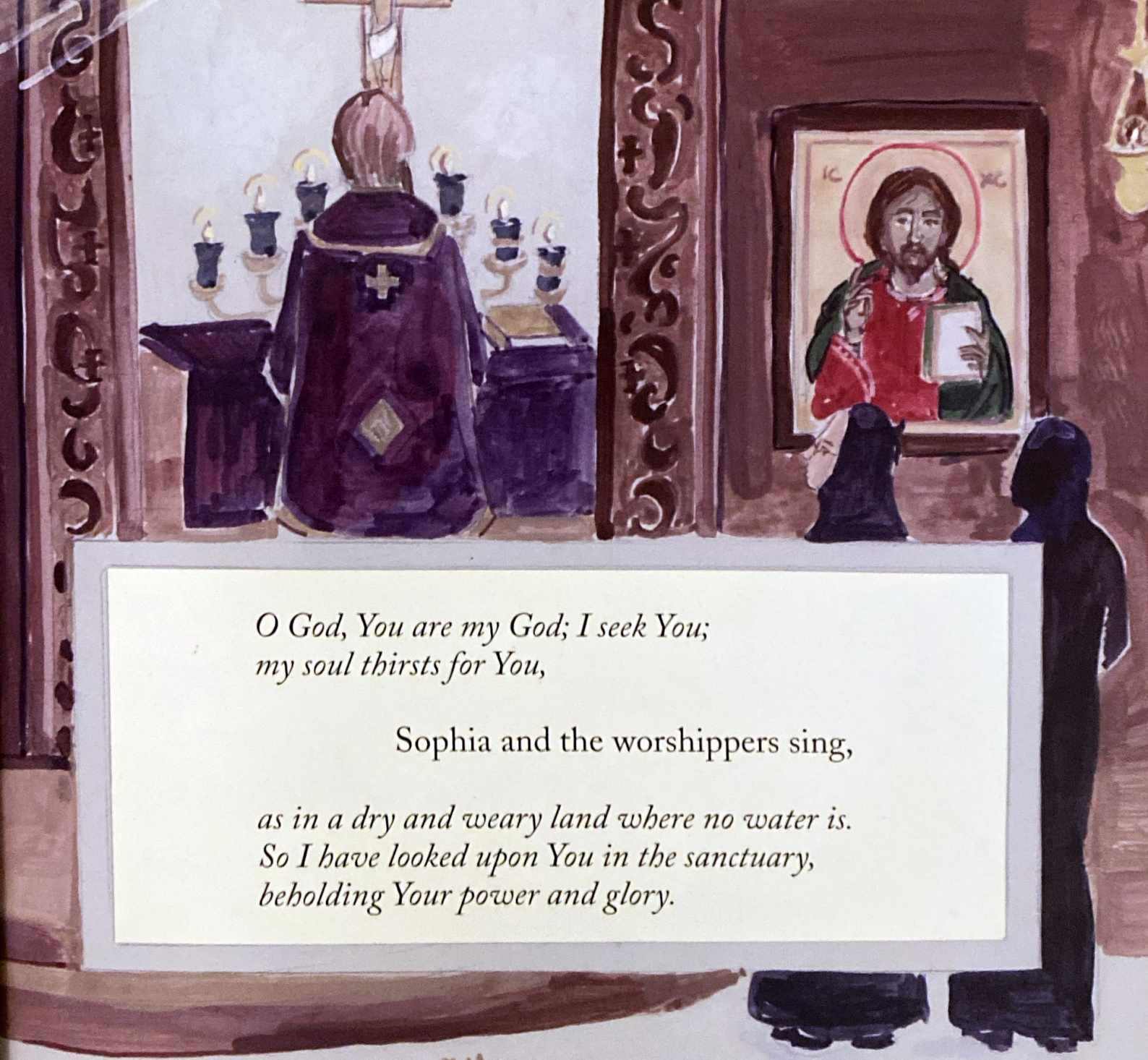
To TALan-to, to TALan-to,
to TALan- TALan- TALan-ton.

Tonk, tonk, tonk, to TALan-ton.


We enter now
the house of the Lord.

*For the Lord God*

*is our sun and our shield.*



*O God, You are my God; I seek You;*
*my soul thirsts for You,*

Sophia and the worshippers sing,

*as in a dry and weary land where no water is.*
*So I have looked upon You in the sanctuary,*
*beholding Your power and glory.*

*Because Your steadfast love is better than life,*
*my lips will praise You.*
*So I will bless You as long as I live;*
*I will lift up my hands and call on Your name.*

Chanting, they praise Him.

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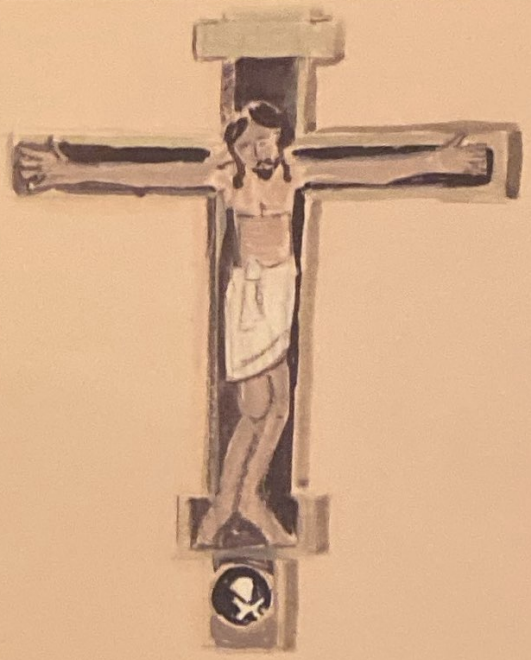

*In the shadow of Your wings I sing for joy.*

In Sophia's heart sounds the memory,

**To TALan-to, to TALan-to,**
**to TALan- TALan- TALan-ton.**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR / ILLUSTRATOR:

Claire Brandenburg is a fine artist turned children's book writer and illustrator. Claire received a BFA in art and education from the University of New Mexico.

Working in a variety of different art forms for over thirty years, she has shown her work in galleries and museums and has received numerous awards. A fascination with the world beneath the apparent surface has always played a part in her writing and art.

Claire is the author and illustrator of several children's books, including *Daniel and the Lion* (2002) and *The Monk Who Grew Prayer* (2003). She lives in Taos, New Mexico, with her husband, and has two grown children.

## A WORD ABOUT THE AUDIO CD INCLUDED AT THE BACK OF THIS BOOK

On the CD you'll find:

- Track 1—The tonk, tonk, tonk of a talanton's call to prayer
  (recorded at the Monastery of St. John of San Francisco in Manton, California (www.monasteryofstjohn.org), by Ninos Oshaana, and used with permission)
- Track 2—The story *Song of the Talanton*, read by Claire Brandenburg
- Track 3—A recording of a large Romanian *toaca* (used by permission of Mother Cassiana, Protection of the Holy Virgin Orthodox Monastery, Lake George, Colorado)
- Track 4—What is a talanton?
- Track 5—How to make a talanton
- Track 6—Introducing Eikona
- Track 7—*Shine, Shine, New Jerusalem*
- Track 8—*Psalm 142*
- Track 9—*Litany of Fervent Intercession*

Many thanks to:
Reader Alex Trigonis,
Viktoria Hedges,
Mother Cassiana,
Father Andrew, Ninos Oshaana,
Brother Christopher,
Presvytera Stacey Dorrance,
and especially Clark Gorder (who mixed and mastered the CD for us).

Credits for the selections from Eikona:
**"Shine, Shine, New Jerusalem"**
from the CD *Come Receive the Light: The Orthros Service of Holy Pascha;*
**Psalm 142**
from the CD *Paraklesis: The Mother of Light;*
**Litany of Fervent Intercession**
from the CD *The Sunday Service of Great Vespers.*

For more information about Eikona, or to purchase their CDs, please contact: P.O Box 4674, Englewood CO 80155, or visit their website at www.eikona.com.
We heartily thank the three sisters of Eikona for allowing their beautiful voices to be included in this CD.

CHILDREN'S / RELIGIOUS
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At the moment of sunrise, a pilgrim visiting a women's monastery hears Christ's call to worship in the rhythmic call of the Talanton.

ISBN 978-1-888212-90-7
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9 781888 212907

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